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SUBJECT: DANISH MFA "STILL WORKING" ON FUNDS FOR LEBANON
TRIBUNAL

REF: STATE 10786

11. (SBU) The Danish government continues to wrestle with internal bureaucratic questions of how to fund a contribution for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (reftel). Danish MFA acting Middle East head Steen Norlov and Lebanon desk officer Jakob Rogild Jakobsen told us February 6 that the foreign ministry supports a contribution, but has so far not been able to overcome rules that prevent such contributions from being officially counted as "development" assistance. Securing funding outside the development budget presents an even greater challenge, they said, and so the Danish MFA will continue to work the issue, arguing that sustaining Tribunal operations directly supports civil society. The Danes welcomed Secretary Rice's note verbale, noting that it should prove helpful in advancing their case within the government.

12. (SBU) More broadly, the Danish government indicated support for the proposed steps outlined in our demarche and shared our concerns about the need to shore up the Lebanese government. Jakobsen, who had returned from a visit to Lebanon days earlier to review the progress of Danish efforts as part of the German-led border monitoring mission, described an overwhelming sense of stalemate in Lebanon. Jakobsen observed that the status quo favors Hezbollah and Aoun, and concluded reluctantly that election of a president could be blocked even beyond next year's parliamentary elections.
CAIN